DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 251 798 CS 007 850

AUTHOR Christensen, K. Eleanor
TITLE A Guide to Individualizing Reading Readiness Activities for Reading Specialists, Clinicians, Teachers and Parents.
PUB DATE Nov 84
NOTE 8p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the New York State Reading Association (18th, Kiamesha Lake, NY, November 6-11, 1984).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Beginning Reading; Developmental Programs; *Developmental Stages; Early Childhood Education; Early Reading; Guidelines; *Individualized Instruction; Individualized Reading; Parent Role; Reading Diagnosis; *Reading Instruction; *Reading Readiness; Teacher Role

ABSTRACT

Useful for teachers and parents of children who are developmentally ready for a beginning reading program, this guide is intended to help plan activities differentiated according to children's readiness for reading and individualized according to their strengths and needs. The guide is also helpful for young children who are either early readers or high risks academically. After specific readiness areas (visual perception, visual motor perception, auditory perception and discrimination, language ability and verbal comprehension, and experiential and cognitive growth) have been assessed, the written guidelines can be used to initiate and reinforce activities appropriate to each child. The necessity of a range of readiness activities is explained and each area is defined. (Author/HTH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

K. Eleanor Christensen

ED251798

A Guide to Individualizing Reading Readiness Activities for Reading Specialists, Clinicians, Teachers and Parents

This paper presents a guide to help plan activities differentiated to children's readiness for reading and individualized to their strengths and needs. After specific readiness areas (i.e., visual perception, visual motor perception, auditory perception and discrimination, language ability and verbal comprehension, and experiential and cognitive growth) have been assessed, the written guideline can be used to initiate and reinforce activities appropriate to each child. The necessity of a range of readiness activities is explained and each area is defined. Practitioners have found the guide useful in working with teachers and parents of children who are developmentally ready for a beginning reading program as well as for young children who are either early readers or at academic high risk.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
K. Eleanor Christensen
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CS007850

A Guide to Individualizing Reading Readiness Activities: for Reading Specialists, Clinicians, Teachers and Parents

Traditionally educators and parents have always agreed that each child should "get off to a good start" in reading. Ideas on how best to achieve this "good start" have been beset with controversy. Aukerman (1984) has listed more than 125 ways to teach beginning reading. And Pikulski (1978) has asked, "How can a classroom teacher, usually a kindergarten or first grade teacher, deal with the concept of readiness with 30 or 60 children when the so-called experts can't agree" (p. 192).

Most reading text books describe good teachers as diagnostic; that is, teachers need to know their children well and teach to each child's individual strengths and needs. It goes without saying that no two children are exactly alike, that each child has reading related areas in which he does very well and other areas in which he needs extra help. This is true at all levels, including the time before the child begins formal reading. The reading readiness period comes at different times for different children and it comes in a variety of different ways. Teachers and parents need to differentiate instruction and plan activities at a variety of levels for each child.

Take the case of Jamie, who was given a variety of screening assessments during the second half of her kindergarten year. Most of these measures supported the information that Jamie's teacher already knew about her. (Jamie's teacher used language experiences in the classroom, and from her use of this approach had gained a good insight into Jamie's needs.) Jamie was operating within the bright range of intelligence. She was above average in social maturity and had a very good attitude about reading. She was learning to dictate stories and enjoy language experience activities although this was not a strength and in the future she would benefit from

many more such experiences. She enjoyed good children's literature. She did so well on a pre-phonic inventory that she was administered a phonic inventory usually reserved for primary grade children. On this, her control over rhyming words and single consonants was excellent and over consonant blends almost as good, while her level appropriate for instruction was consonant diagraphs. She could name and print from dictation all the letters of the alphabet, but she had difficulty with the fine motor control necessary in printing. Jamie was neither an early reader nor a child at academic high risk. She was instead one of a group of developmental kindergarten children who, like all children nationwide, needed to receive instruction individualized to her strengths and needs.

What Jamie did not need was workbook or dittoed material on each of the letters of alphabet. What she did need was a personalized plan of activities such as can be offered through the guidelines which will shortly follow. These guidelines coordinate particularly well with language experience but can be included in any program.

In the area of visual perception, she would benefit most from noticing similarities and differences between letters and words in picture books and in her language experience dictated stories. Language experience is an excellent readiness tool with great potential for continually diagnosing skills and individualizing instruction. Because she was having difficulties with fine motor coordination, it was recommended that she try tactile experiences such as writing letters in sand or fingerpaint, as well as using large colored chalk on a slate board. Taking Jamie's great strength in auditory discimination and phonics into consideration, it was appropriate to introduce her to word attack skills she would need in reading. Since her phonic instructional level was consonant diagraphs, effort was made to work in this area using Jamie's dictated stories and word bank

from her language experiences. In the areas of language ability and in experiential and cognitive growth, Jamie, like many of the other children in her kindergarten class, would benefit from hearing good children's literature read to her and from having a chance to talk with others about daily quality experiences in her life.

In Jamie's case, the reading specialist and her classroom teacher provided extra reinforcement for all these activities through the home. Young children's parents are eager and delighted to understand and assist their child in a "good start" in reading. With a little help from the reading specialist, the classroom teacher was able to provide Jamie's parents with the following guide in which she suggested appropriate activities that were just right for Jamie.

A PERSONALIZED READING READINESS GUIDE

Here are a few activities which can be done at home or at school to help encourage readiness for reading. They have been selected especially for your child on an individualized basis.

Child's name _____ Date _____

Child's age _____ By _____

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES	READINESS AREA	
_____	1) VISUAL PERCEPTION	Skill in this area is necessary because the reader needs to notice small details. To help strengthen visual perception, teach your child to notice details of objects. Do this often.
_____	a) MATCHING GEOMETRIC FORMS OR PICTURES	Concrete items such as blocks or puzzles are <u>generally</u> of greater value to your child than pictures.

b) MATCHING LETTERS OR WORDS

Activities with letters or words are more valuable as preparation for beginning reading than activities with pictures or geometric forms. Point out to your child that a word or letter in one place is the same as that used in another location. Ask your child to do this.

2) VISUAL MOTOR PERCEPTION

Ability in this area is basic to writing and school related activities. Your child should have many opportunities to try to print letters and words.

3) AUDITORY PERCEPTION AND DISCRIMINATION

Dealing successfully with sequences of sounds or letters is essential for phonics training and word attack development. Rhyming words and beginning or ending consonant sounds can form the basis for many fun-type game activities for your child.

4) LANGUAGE ABILITY AND VERBAL COMPREHENSION

Listening and talking precede reading and writing. To grow in oral language usage, your child needs to hear language used well either by conversing with adults or by listening to quality children's literature. Talk, listen and read to your child.

_____ 5) PHYSICAL CONDITION

General physical inadequacies contribute to poor school readiness and lower basic vitality. Keep your child well rested and healthy.

_____ 6) INTEREST IN READING AND AESTHETIC SATISFACTION

Fostering an interest in reading is a major step toward later success in reading. Take your child to the library, get him a library card and bring books, magazines, and newspapers into your home.

_____ 7) EXPERIENTIAL AND COGNITIVE GROWTH

A variety of in-depth experiences are necessary for conceptual development. Comprehension in reading is built on experiences. Take your child places and talk about his experiences.

_____ 8) PERSONALITY GROWTH

Emotional, social, and motivational development all play a role in your child's school readiness, as well as his interests and attitudes. To realize his learning potential, your child needs to grow in independence. Teach him to share and to get along well with his friends.

_____ 9) LARGE MOTOR TRAINING

Motor learning precedes more differentiated growth and development. Along with school readiness activities, your child should participate in such large

motor activities as jumping, climbing, or bouncing on a trampoline.

_____ 10) ADDITIONAL READING FOR PARENTS AND OTHER INTERESTED ADULTS — Know where to go for more suggestions.

This form has been used for many kindergarten children. It is not necessary to write in a suggestion at every level for every child, but only to suggest activities which seem especially important. Reading specialists sometimes help classroom teachers through the guidelines. Teachers sometimes find the guide helpful to give to parents, either during the year or at parent conferences. Sometimes parents and teachers work together in filling out activities for the guide. Parents often have suggestions, which create more enthusiasm on their part about following through.

The guide has been found useful in working with teachers and parents of children who are developmentally ready for a beginning reading program as well as for young children who are either early readers or at academic high risk. It is the goal of this guide to encourage reading specialists, clinicians, teachers and parents to plan activities differentiated to children's readiness for reading and individualized to their strengths and needs. It is hoped that the guide will point out the necessity of a range of readiness activities and provide structure for a balanced variety of suggestions. And it is hoped that the guide will encourage many children to get off to a happy and "good start" in reading.

* * * * * *

Aukerman, R. Approaches to beginning reading. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc. 1984.

Pikulski, J. Readiness for reading: A practical approach. Language Arts, 1978, 55(2), 192-197.